



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10
1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900
Seattle, Washington 98101-3140

April 21, 2010

CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Reply To: ECL-111

Marko Adzic
Teck American Incorporated
501 North Riverpoint Boulevard, Suite 300
Spokane, Washington 99202

Dear Mr. Adzic,

With this letter, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is approving the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for Methods Development for the White Sturgeon Sediment Toxicity Study. The first version of the QAPP was delivered to EPA on March 5, 2010. EPA provided written comments to Teck on April 2, 2010 that included comments from the Participating Parties. Teck revised the QAPP and provided a new version to EPA on April 12, 2010. This new version adequately addresses the comments in EPA's April 2, 2010 letter. This QAPP will provide useful information for the design of the Assessment of Sediment Toxicity to White Sturgeon study, and no further changes are required.

EPA is in the process of reviewing the draft QAPP for the Assessment of Sediment Toxicity to White Sturgeon study, and two meetings are currently planned with EPA, Teck, and the Participating Parties to discuss our comments on the draft QAPP. EPA's comments are still being developed, but there is one comment that we want to highlight now, because Teck may wish to test methods to address this comment as part of the methods development work. Our comment is that in addition to sediment, pore water, and overlying water, the sediment-water interface needs to be sampled at the beginning, middle, and end of the exposure period. This could be accomplished by deploying peepers and/or diffusion gradient in thin film (DGT) probes at the sediment-water interface. EPA's technical team would be happy to discuss this issue with you further, should you have any questions.

Finally, EPA wishes to reiterate that the data and information generated in the Assessment of Sediment Toxicity to White Sturgeon study will be evaluated against EPA expectations and data needs as described in EPA's "Level of Effort" paper for sturgeon. The Level of Effort paper was provided to Teck in October 2009 and discussed at length during technical meetings held in Seattle in January 2010. Only data of quality acceptable to EPA will be used to support the ecological risk assessment and overall remedial investigation. We hope that the QAPP for method development work being approved today helps Teck fine-tune the

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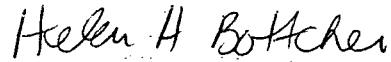


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design of the toxicity study, and that the study generates informative data of quality acceptable to EPA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helen A Bottcher".

Helen Bottcher
Project Manager

cc: Dan Audet, U.S. Department of the Interior
Patti Bailey, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
Randy Connolly, Spokane Tribe of Indians
John Roland, Washington State Department of Ecology